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Book review *Contemporary Perspectives on Ageism* by Liat Ayalon & Clemens Tesch-Römer

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to describe the contents of a book entitled ***Contemporary Perspectives on Ageism***. Book debates around the various facets of ageism, its consequences on society and in society, and provides a background for several feasible interventions on how to tackle and attempt to lessen ageism. The book brings important theoretical and empirical knowledge to all those, who work with the older population.

Review of a book entitled *Contemporary Perspectives on Ageism* by Liat Ayalon & Clemens Tesch-Römer

Ageism is a term that first appeared in the 1960s and has been an area of interest for many scientists in various fields since then. Multidisciplinary knowledge accumulated since 2018 has been collated in *Contemporary Perspectives on Ageism* by Liat Ayalon, a psychologist from Israel, in collaboration with Clemens Tesch-Römer, a psychologist from Germany, in this SpringerOpen edition. The book is available online and has been downloaded over 738,000 times over the last two years, which in itself speaks in favour of its significance for the scientific world.

Bringing together scientists from the social sciences, humanities, and biomedicine and health, the work is presented in a 550-page plain text format. Over four years, the editors collaborated with many authors from over 35 countries, and this book is the result of their work. Given the diversity of interests of each author and their large number, this is a truly exceptional example of multidisciplinary symbiosis in the fields of psychology, sociology, social work, medicine, health care, law, politics and economics, demography, pharmacy, and occupational therapy and communication, all united under a common denominator – ageism. The book provides a thorough insight into the very origin of ageism and its consequences on society and in society, and prescribes interventions aimed at combating negative stereotypes towards older people. It is divided into 31 chapters and thematically categorized. The first chapters focus on ageism in general at a global and individual level, describing the concept of ageism and its origin, as well as ageism in the labour market, and providing more perspectives from the economic and legal viewpoints. For me, as a health professional with a special interest in the incidence of ageism in nursing practice and health care, I have a particular interest in Chapter 13, “Ageism in the Health Care System: Providers, Patients, and Systems”, by Mary F. Wyman, Sharon Shiovitz-Ezra, and Jürgen Bengel. The chapter states that, statistically, elderly people make up two thirds of health care users, and this trend looks set to continue into the future. Negative attitudes towards elderly patients are potential obstacles to health equality and the quality of care and its outcomes. The chapter also deals with the elderly population at two levels of health care: the micro and the macro. From the micro, individual-level perspective, it describes attitudes among health professionals towards elderly patients, with special emphasis on the attitudes of nurses and nursing students, their communication styles, and the decision-making processes adopted for treatment and care. From the macro-level perspective, it examines the impact of economics on treatment, health care benefits, the reasons why older patients are not included

in clinical trials, and the consequences of a lack of education in the field of geriatrics. The key in the fight against negative attitudes towards elderly patients by health professionals is the provision of continuous education in the field of geriatrics and the inclusion of more geriatric topics in the curriculum. The latter is particularly emphasized as one of the interventions in the fight against ageism, although it is apparent that progress has been made in the last decade and that ageism is no longer viewed as an abstract and unknown concept. In conclusion, we can end on a positive note: there is a growing recognition of the manifestation of ageism at all levels and increasing support for interventions aimed at changing negative attitudes. By gathering the findings of so many different experts in one place, the editors have created an indispensable publication which answers a wealth of questions on the topic of ageism. The chapters are clearly structured and thematically presented to facilitate reading. I would recommend this book to all health professionals, primarily nurses, because their attitudes and styles of dealing with patients are examined in detail in chapter 13. I would also recommend it to all students in the field of medicine and health who are going to work with the geriatric population in the future in order to expand their existing knowledge, gain some further understanding of this issue, and recognize their ageist attitudes in time, even though these may be unintentional. The opportunity to download this book for free is certainly an added benefit and an incentive to recommend this valuable text book.

References

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PRIKAZ KNJIGE *SUVREMENE PERSPEKTIVE AGEIZMA* AUTORA LIAT AYALON I CLEMENSA TESCH-RÖMERA

Sažetak

Cilj je rada opisati sadržaj knjige naslova *Suvremene perspektive ageizma*. Knjiga raspravlja o različitim aspektima ageizma, njegovim posljedicama na društvo i društvu općenito te propisuje intervencije usmjerene na suzbijanje negativnih stereotipa prema starijim ljudima. Knjiga donosi važna teorijska i empirijska znanja svima koji rade sa starijom populacijom.

Ključne riječi: ageizam, intervencije, zdravstveni profesionalci
